

REMARKS

Reconsideration of this application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

Initially, the Applicants would like to thank the Examiner for the indication that claims 3, 4, and 8-11 contain allowable subject matter.

However, in the Official Action, the Examiner rejects claims 1, 12, and 14 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,919,112 to Siegmund (hereinafter "Siegmund"). Furthermore, the Examiner rejects claims 2 and 13 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Siegmund in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,982,725 to Hibino et al. (hereinafter "Hibino").

In response, claims 1, 2, and 12-14 have been canceled thereby rendering the rejections thereof moot. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §§ 102(b) and 103(a) be withdrawn.

Furthermore, new claims 15-17 have been added to further define the patentable invention. New claims 15-17 are fully supported in the original disclosure. Thus, no new matter has been entered into the disclosure by way of the addition of new claims 15-17.

Siegmund discloses an endoscope in which the control handle unit (12) is separable from a flexible shaft (13) at a threaded connection (14). In such an endoscope, push rods (51, 52) are used to rotate a rocker arm (32) that in turn moves control wires (28, 29) to bend a bending section (19). The push rods are activated by manually rotating a crank arm (56). Siegmund mentions that the crank arm can be replaced by a small electric motor (column 3, lines 34-38). However, Siegmund does not discuss how such motor is to be

connected to the push rods (e.g., how the driving force of the motor is transmitted to the push rods) or whether such motor is to be external or internal in the control section.

New claim 15 recites, an electric bending endoscope comprising a motor, a driving force transmitting member and an inserting portion, where a first unit holds the motor and a second unit holds the driving force transmitting member. A first connecting member connects the motor (first unit) and the driving force transmitting member (second unit) and a second connecting member connects the driving force transmitting member (second unit) and the inserting portion.

In contrast, Siegmund discloses a motor (driving force generating source) and the driving force transmitting unit which are detachably provided, however, the driving force transmitting unit and the bending inserting portion are not detachably provided. Siegmund discloses the driving force transmitting unit and the bending inserting portion as being, not separable, but as having an integral construction, which is clearly different from that recited in new independent claim 15. New independent claim 17 has similar recitations.

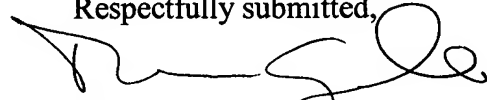
Thus, Applicants submit that independent claims 15 and 17 patentably distinguish over the prior art and are allowable and that claim 16 is at least allowable as being dependent therefrom.

Further, claims 3 and 5 have been amended to change their dependencies from canceled claims 1 and 2, respectively, to new independent claim 15 and to be consistent with new independent claim 15. Thus, claims 3-11 depend from new claim 15, either directly or through an intervening claim(s). Therefore, Applicants further submit that dependent claims 3-11 are at least allowable as being dependent from new independent claim 15.

Lastly, although the Examiner did not object to the Abstract as containing legal phraseology ("comprises"), the same has been amended to change "comprises" to --includes-- to comply with USPTO requirements.

In view of the above, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that this application be allowed and a Notice of Allowance issued. If the Examiner believes that a telephone conference with Applicant's attorneys would be advantageous to the disposition of this case, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,



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TS:cm
Enclosure (Clean Copy of Amended Abstract)